

Article - Environment

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§9–662.

(a) For each project that it operates, a district may charge the owners of parcels serviced by or connected to the project:

- (1) A minimum charge; and
- (2) A usage charge that is based on the use of the project by the owner of the parcel.

(b) The district shall use funds received from charges made under this section:

- (1) To operate, maintain, and repair the project;
- (2) To maintain proper depreciation allowances;
- (3) To pay operation expenses of the district;
- (4) To repay advances made by member counties under § 9–628 of this subtitle; and
- (5) To pay the principal and interest on bonds issued under this subtitle.

(c) For water service, the sanitary commission:

- (1) Shall make a minimum charge:
 - (i) That is based on the size of the meter serving the property and is uniform throughout the service area for each size of meter; and
 - (ii) That, for properties to which no meter is connected, is reasonable and uniform throughout the service area; and

(2) Subject to the meter size and uniformity requirements of this subsection, may change the minimum charge as necessary.

(d) For sewerage service, the sanitary commission shall:

(1) Make a minimum charge that is reasonable and uniform throughout the service area; and

(2) Collect, each year, the minimum charge in the same manner as the sanitary commission collects benefit assessments.

(e) If a minimum charge for sewerage service is unpaid, the minimum charge has the same status as an unpaid benefit assessment.

(f) For solid waste disposal systems, the sanitary commission shall make a minimum charge that is reasonable and uniform throughout the service area.

(g) If the sanitary commission uses a water meter, the sanitary commission shall connect the water meter at the sanitary commission's expense.

(h) For water usage, the sanitary commission shall make a charge that:

(1) Is based on meter readings; or

(2) If no water meter is connected to the property, is:

(i) Based on the estimated water usage; and

(ii) Uniform among unmetered properties in the service area.

(i) For sewerage systems and solid waste disposal systems, the sanitary commission shall make a reasonable usage charge.

(j) Except for bills for minimum charges for sewerage services, the sanitary commission:

(1) Shall send to each property owner:

(i) For water service, a bill for minimum charges and usage charges for water once each 3 or 6 months; and

(ii) For other charges, a bill once each 3, 6, or 12 months; and

(2) May stagger the frequency and dates of bills sent under this section.

(k) The property owner promptly shall pay any bill sent under this section.

(l) If a water bill is unpaid for 30 days after being sent, and after written notice is left on the premises or mailed to the last known address of the owner, the sanitary commission may:

(1) Disconnect water service to the property; and

(2) Require, before reconnecting water service, payment of the entire water bill plus a reconnection charge reasonably related to the cost of reconnection, as established by ordinance of the governing body of the county or municipal corporation in which the water service is provided.

(m) (1) If a charge for which a bill sent under this section is in default 60 days after the bill is sent, the charge is in default.

(2) When a charge is in default, it is a lien on the property and the sanitary commission may collect the charge in the same manner as benefit assessments.

(n) (1) This subsection applies only in Dorchester County and Somerset County.

(2) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law:

(i) A district may charge an owner of a parcel serviced by or connected to a project that the district operates a late fee for any unpaid usage charge that is based on the use of the project by the owner of the parcel;

(ii) A sanitary commission may require, before reconnecting water service, payment of any applicable late fees in addition to any other charge authorized by this section; and

(iii) A charge that is in default shall accrue interest from the date of default at a rate set by the sanitary commission.

(o) In Garrett County, notwithstanding any other provisions of law:

(1) The district may charge an owner of a parcel serviced by or connected to a project that the district operates a late fee for any unpaid usage charge that is based on the use of the project by the owner of the parcel;

(2) The County Commissioners of Garrett County may require, before reconnecting water service, payment of any applicable late fees in addition to any other charge authorized by this section; and

(3) A charge that is in default shall accrue interest from the date of default at a rate set by the County Commissioners.

(p) (1) This subsection applies only to property subject to a condominium regime established under Title 11 of the Real Property Article.

(2) Notwithstanding any other law, if the sanitary commission directly bills the governing body of a condominium or a person designated by the governing body of a condominium for water or sewer usage charges for all or a portion of the units in a condominium property, and a charge is in default for at least 60 days, the sanitary commission shall post notice conspicuously at or near the entry to the common area of the condominium.

(3) The sanitary commission may enter onto the common area of a condominium property at a reasonable time to post the notice required under this subsection.

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